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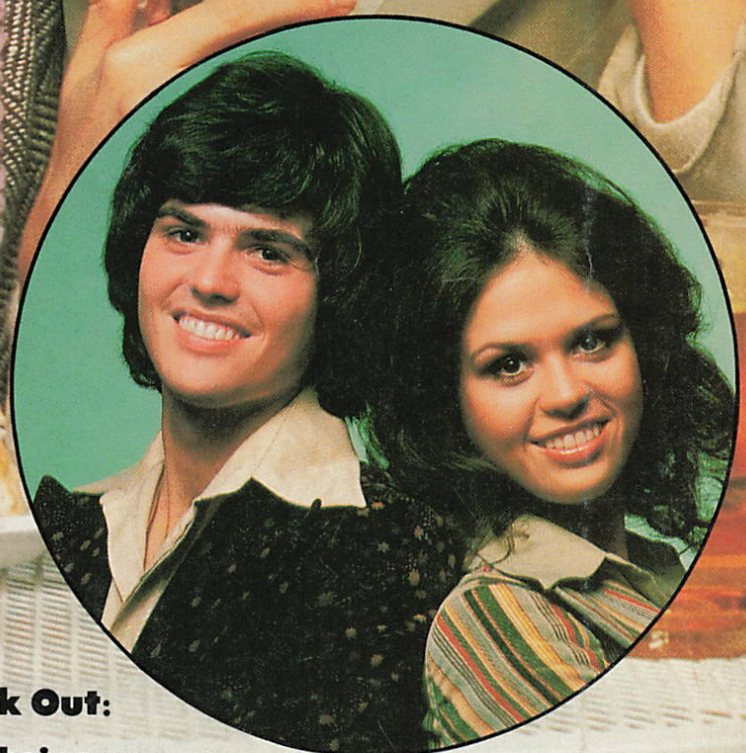

Donny & Marie Speak Out:
What it means to be on their own.

TV FAVORITES

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TWO MID-SEASON SMASH HITS!

"LAVERNE & SHIRLEY"
"DONNY & MARIE"

In the early 1960s television series were made up of 39 new or "original" episodes each year. For the remaining 13 weeks of the year, the best episodes were repeated. The name "summer reruns" became part of the language since the summer months, when viewing was lighter because people could be outdoors enjoying warm weather, were chosen for the repeats. In those days, all new series were launched in September.

By the mid-1960s a new concept was introduced to television by ABC-TV—the "second season." This was based on the introduction of new programming in the early winter months. Series that had premiered in the fall and had failed to win audiences were cancelled. They were replaced in January or February with new series that might stand a better chance with viewers.

Since that time, the "second season" has become a routine part of television programming strategy, although the name "second season" itself has disappeared. The networks now talk about "mid-season" programs. Instead of 39 original episodes a year, TV series now do 22 new programs each season, with 30 weeks of reruns or pre-emptions for special non-series programming. Part of the reason for this is the much higher cost of TV production today.

Both "Laverne and Shirley" and "Donny and Marie," on which we are focusing our attention in this issue of TV FAVORITES, are examples of highly successful mid-season programs. Both are ABC-TV series, which were moved in at the mid-season mark to shore up then-faltering time periods.

The two shows also illustrate another television trend in recent years—the "spin-off." "Laverne and Shirley" is a spin-off in the classic sense. Its

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two title characters were originally introduced in another series, "Happy Days," also produced by Paramount Television.

The girls were first seen in a "Happy Days" episode as dates for Henry "Fonzie" Winkler and Ronnie Howard. Both ABC-TV and Paramount Television felt there was a series that could be constructed around Laverne and Shirley, and they proceeded to develop one. When the new program was introduced in January 1976 it was an immediate success. People already knew the title characters, and were into the 1950s nostalgia scene thanks to "Happy Days." Of course, the appearance of Henry Winkler on the first "Laverne and Shirley" episode didn't hurt a bit!

The success of "Laverne and Shirley" has proven to be even greater than that of "Happy Days." In fact, "Happy Days" has enjoyed higher ratings since the spin-off series came on the scene.

"Donny and Marie" is not a spin-off of an older program, but it is a type of spin-off in the sense that its stars were already very well known recording artists. Donny and Marie Osmond and the Osmond Family have enjoyed numerous recording successes in the past, and have also been among the top nightclub performers in the country. They have guested on most of the important television variety and interview programs. Giving them a series of their own was a very smart idea for ABC-TV, and it has paid off handsomely. The network has managed to spin-off a series against tried-and-true talent.

Some critics of television contend that spin-offs lack originality and are less creative than brand new series concepts. A more reasonable attitude, however, is that spin-offs give viewers more of what they have indicated they want to see. Television is a medium of entertainment, and if it isn't giving viewers what they want it's failing to deliver.

The success of "Laverne and Shirley," incidentally, is already leading to the development of a new spin-off series, "Lenny and Squiggy In The Army." The title characters will be played by Michael McKean and David L. Lander, who introduced the roles on "Laverne and Shirley."

The creative team preparing "Lenny and Squiggy In The Army" is the same as the team behind "Laverne and Shirley" and "Happy Days." It's a Paramount Television production in association with Miller-Milkis Productions and Henderson Productions. Garry Marshall is the series' creator, and will be executive producer along with Thomas L. Miller and Edward Milkis. Tony Marshall will be producer of the new spin-off. With such a successful team working together again, the only question that comes to mind is "How can it possibly not be a smash hit?" Watch ABC-TV in the future and find out for yourself if lightening will strike three times in a row. The "smart money" says it will.

As for "Donny and Marie," their appeal is to the same teenage/young adult audience as "Laverne and Shirley." The Osmonds, of course, are as clean-cut as they come, so they bear no resemblance to the somewhat scruffy working-class setting of "Laverne and Shirley." They are, however, lots of fun, very entertaining and a pleasure to spend time with as viewers.

We hope you enjoy this issue of TV FAVORITES, and would like to know what series you'd want to read about in the future. Please drop us a line at 380 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

— THE EDITOR.

"LAVERNE & SHIRLEY"

TV'S BIGGEST HIT PREMIERE IN 10 YEARS!

"Laverne and Shirley" premiered on ABC-TV on Tuesday, January 27, 1976. It turned out to be television's biggest hit premiere in ten years. Thirty-five per cent of all American TV sets were tuned in to the premiere of this 1959-set comedy starring Penny Marshall and Cindy Williams as two workers in a Milwaukee brewery. Half of the television sets in use when the show was telecast were tuned to it! This translates into an audience of about 50 million people, which is larger than most TV series ever even dream of.

Neither Penny nor Cindy was the kind of name star who might be expected to draw such staggeringly great audiences from the word go. What, then, accounted for the program's impact in the Nielsen ratings? Aside from the fact that the show is well-written, well-produced, well-performed and frequently very very funny, there are two other factors going for it: (a) "Laverne and Shirley" is a spin-off from the enormously successful "Happy Days" series; and (b) "L & S" is television's first blue-collar comedy in many years.

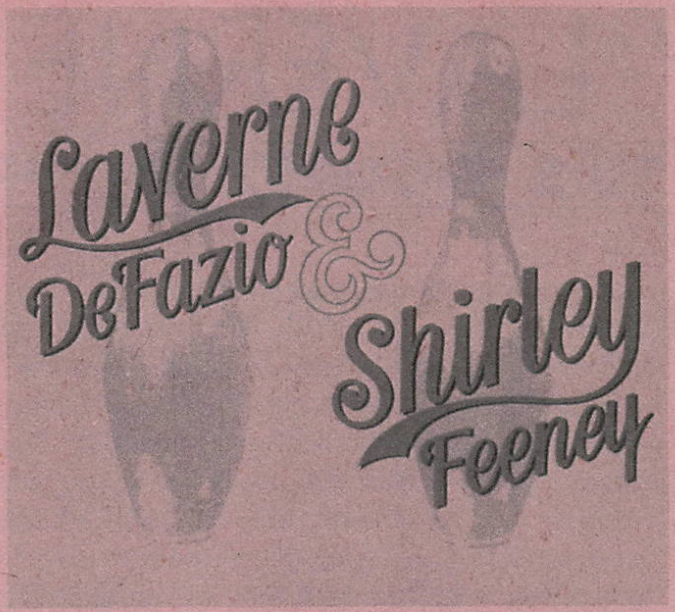
In recent years television programming executives have developed the spin-off as the answer to their problems. When TV first began it was relatively easy to launch a new series. The program debuted in September and the network it was on tried to help it find an audience. Advertising, publicity and on-the-air promotion were some of the ways in which this was attempted. Sometimes the networks juggled series' time-slots, hoping that a new time period would help viewers sample a new series.

This worked for the early days of TV, but in recent years the cost of success or failure has become so great that the networks no longer feel they can give new series much time in which to prove themselves. Hence, the search for the "instant hit."

About the only way in which a program can debut as a pre-sold property is to introduce the main characters in the new series as part of the action on an already popular program. That was exactly what ABC-TV and Paramount Television did with "Laverne and Shirley."

ABC-TV, the most aggressive and innovative of the three networks, knew that it had an enormous

"Laverne and Shirley" represents "the proletarian comedy."



hit in "Happy Days." As you probably read in our last issue of TV FAVORITES, some important changes had been made in "Happy Days" since its premiere several years ago. The most significant of these changes was the placing of much more emphasis on the role of Henry Winkler as "Fonzie." Henry is surely the biggest pop culture hero of modern times!

With so much audience interest in Fonzie, ABC-TV would have been happy to create a new series starring Henry Winkler. One of the plans for such a program called for Henry to play a 30-ish father of a Fonzie-like boy. The only trouble was that Henry refused to do a series of his own. He is a performer with an excellent background in the legitimate theatre and motion pictures, and his aim is to do more than just be a television star.

The network, however, had to come up with

some other means of taking advantage of "Happy Days" ' success. "Laverne and Shirley," according to those involved in its creation, came about most unexpectedly.

Garry Marshall, one of Hollywood's most creative WRITERS—PRODUCERS—"Happy Days" and "The Odd Couple" are among his pre-"Laverne and Shirley" credits—explains that "we introduced Laverne and Shirley in an episode of 'Happy Days'. They were small roles but important and we wanted two exceptionally good actresses to play them, better performers than we normally would have hired for parts of that size. So, we asked the girls to do us a favor. Fortunately, they agreed."

After the girls' first appearance on "Happy Days," the network decided to create a series for them. Two more stints on "Happy Days" were provided for them in a further effort to make viewers aware of Laverne and Shirley.

Since those first appearances on "Happy Days" the two girls' characters have been somewhat refined. They started out as two bimbos. But today Laverne and Shirley are a little softer and nicer.

On the premiere episode, for instance, there was this exchange of dialogue between the girls. Laverne tells Shirley that "the only reason a gentleman' would take you out, Shirley, is for a little vo-do-oh-do." Shirley snaps back "I don't vo-de-oh-do!" Laverne gives in, but comments that "you vo-de-oh!" To this Shirley answers "Only once, and I was going steady!"

Of the two girls, Shirley is particularly careful about her reputation. Charles Witbeck, in an articles published on February 29, 1976 in the Philadelphia Bulletin, pointed out that "Cindy's Shirley Feeney is the optimistic type, given to daydreams about finding Mr. Right. She's brought back to reality by Penny's Laverne De Fazio, who cuts Shirley down to size. 'Don't waste your time going out with college boys. That's out of our league.' " He quotes Penny as saying that "Girls like Shirley and Laverne go to school, work and get married. That's about it. Their expectations are not the greatest."

The girls have been described by Garry Marshall, one of the creators and executive producers of the series, in this way: "Shirley is a dreamer, a Cinderella who believes Mr. Right Guy will come along to sweep her off her feet and to a better place in life. She thinks anything is possible. Laverne is the realist—she was brought up to accept her niche. She's street smart and spunky and she'd like to make more of herself, but she's afraid

They started out as two bimbos. But today Laverne and Shirley are a little softer and nicer.

she'd get hurt."

In the "Happy Days" episode introducing the girls, Laverne was Fonzie's date. They brought Shirley along as a blind date for Richie Cunningham, played by Ron Howard, who co-starred with Cindy Williams in the hit movie "American Graffiti."

Taking full advantage of "Happy Days," the girls were written into that show as guest stars on January 27, the night their own program premiered. The telecast of "Happy Days" immediately preceded the debut of "Laverne and Shirley." In that first episode Henry "Fonzie" Winkler joined the girls as a guest star in their series!

Ron Howard was once quoted as saying he was really not very surprised that "L&S" had captured such terrific ratings. "People want escapism," he noted. "And you can bet your boots we will be seeing seven or eight other comedies like ours on the air within th enext couple of years. When one show succeeds, the networks keep using the same format until it runs dry. It's a guessing game as to what the public wants. One year it's social statements, the next year light comedy like 'Happy Days'."

While the fact that the program was a spin-off of "Happy Days" may not be the only reason for its success, it certainly helped quite a lot. By late February, the nation's television columnists were commenting regularly about "Laverne and Shirley's" top ratings.

N.P. Clark of the Baltimore News-American wrote: "If you note the absence of 'Laverne and Shirley,' last week's leader, from the latest TV ratings below, that was because the show was preempted by President Ford's press conference."

Bob Martin, TV Editor of the Long Beach, Calif., Independent, wrote: "Laverne and Shirley,' which topped the Nielsens last week, was abruptly yanked off ABC's schedule Tuesday night because President Ford's conference would have overlapped it in some parts of the country. A rerun of 'Happy Days' aired in its place in the West."

Joseph Thesken of the San Diego Evening Tribune commented that "For the fifth week in a row, ABC-TV is leading the pack in the numbers game because of the surprising popularity of its new midseason entries 'Laverne and Shirley,' 'The Bionic Woman,' 'Rich Man, Poor Man' and 'Donny and Marie' . . . 'Laverne and Shirley' is the top-rated show on the air, breaking the hold 'All in the Family' has had for so long. In the past three weeks, it has had two No. 1's and one No. 4. Not bad for a spinoff of 'Happy Days'."

In addition to being a spin-off series, "Laverne and Shirley" was oriented to blue-collar audiences. There are, to be sure, more working people in the country than there are educated, affluent, professionals. Since television is a mass medium, it seeks to build mass audiences. Certainly, the saga of two working girls is more likely to touch that mass audience than anything about, say, two society belles.

This has been noted by many of the leading television writers throughout the country. Les Brown of the New York Times, for instance, commented on the subject. His article was headlined: "BLUE COLLAR IS NEXT FALL'S NEW WRINKLE." Discussing trends for the coming fall season, he wrote:

"Some signs are easy to read. The smash premiere of 'Laverne and Shirley' on ABC on Jan. 27, which captured 47 percent of the audience, carried the message that working-class comedy has—for whatever reasons—a special appeal today. Not sophisticated single girls or divorcees trying to make it in the glamour world of media or advertising (like 'Mary Tyler Moore,' 'Rhoda,' 'Phyllis' et al.), Laverne and Shirley live in square Milwaukee and have jobs in a brewery."

Mr. Brown, who was formerly the television/radio editor of the trade paper Variety, went on to report that "if the dynamite debut of that sit-com [situation comedy] didn't persuade those who divine network program schedules that blue-collar is the new wrinkle next fall, the one-hour revival of 'The Honeymooners' a few nights later, marking the 25th anniversary of that series, was surely the clincher. The one-shot special about the home life of a bus driver, a sewer workers and their wives drew 35 percent of the audience against 'Rhoda,' 'Phyllis' and the premiere of 'The Rich Little Show'."

Don Freeman, TV editor of the San Diego Union, also wrote on that "Laverne and Shirley" represents "the proletarian comedy. As opposed to the ordinary sitcom, the prole-com dwells on the problems of working people and it is, therefore, a lineal descendant of Jackie Gleason and Art Carney—the bus driver and sewer worker, respectively—and the Honeymooners. Obviously, with Archie Bunker employed on the docks, 'All in the Family' is yet another offshoot of the phenomenon."

Neither Penny nor Cindy was the kind of name star who might be expected to draw such staggeringly great audiences from the word go.

He went on to quote Penny Marshall as saying " 'We're strictly blue-collar workers and we struggle to live on our meager salaries."

John Voorhees, television editor of the Seattle Daily Times, addressed himself to the same point. He asked readers "Is there significance in the fact that they are 'blue-collar working girls' in ordinary jobs, unlike Rhoda in her New York apartment and Mary Tyler Moore with her TV job in Minneapolis and Phyllis being a photographer's assistant in smart San Francisco? They are all farther up the social ladder than Laverne and Shirley who are bottling beer in a brewery in Milwaukee and live in a basement apartment in a working class section of that city."

Garry Marshall once explained it this way: "No one else on TV is doing early Lucy. The other ladies on sit-coms are classy: they're well off, smart and they dress well. Laverne and Shirley are fefinitely not classy; they're blue-collar workers who went to work straight out of high school. They're decent people. They're people a lot of other people can identify with. Laverne's the kind of gal who knock the stuffings out of Mary Richards, Rhoda and Phyllis, and, for good measure, mop up the floor with Barbara Walters—and still remain a vulnerable character."

Penny Marshall has been quoted as saying, "We started the girls out tougher, but we keep having to pull back. The characters have potential, by they're certainly not the characters either Cindy or I envisioned. I thought we were going to have our hair in rollers and wear black scarves to cover our hickeys. But they don't think people want to see two toughies in their living room every week, so they mellowed us out and made us kind of blah. But we're a hit, so maybe they know what they're doing."

Clearly "they" do know how to do it. In this case "they" means a great many talented behind-the-scenes people. "Laverne and Shirley" was created by Gary Marshall and Mark Rothman and Lowell Ganz. Its executive producers are Garry Marshall, Thomas L. Miller and Edward K. Milkis. Lowell Ganz and Mark Rothman are the series producers, and the series is produced by Tony Marshall. (I should note that television credits are sometimes complicated, but the production credits for "Laverne and Shirley" are among the most complex I've run in to in many years in the television business!) The program is produced by Paramount Television in association with Miller-Milkis Productions.

The series's concept, according to Paramount, is a "comedy of two young blue-collar workers—girls—in the bottle capping department of a Milwaukee brewery, a kookie couple of friends

Laverne and Shirley are definitely not classy; they're blue-collar workers who went to work straight out of high school.

who share an apartment and scrap constantly because one dreams of a better life while the other knows that this is it."

In one previously published interview with Don Freeman of the San Diego Union, the girls discussed their respective roles. Cindy Williams explained that: "Laverne and Shirley are like so many other girls from lower-class families who finish high school and go right to work. They don't really have too much opportunity to rise above their niche in life, but they can hope it won't always be so."

She went on to point out that "of the two, Shirley is the dreamer—that's me. Shirley is waiting for Mr. Right Guy to come along and give her the good life. The brewery is all right—you get to wear goggles and earplugs and drink as much beer as you want—but Shirley dreams of something better, maybe out in the suburbs."

What about Laverne? Cindy went on to say "Now Laverne, the realist, keeps putting Shirley down, bringing her back to reality—or trying to. Still, as Shirley tells Laverne, we all have a right to our dreams. Maybe that's what this is all about. There haven't been very many attempts in television or movies to have pairs of women, like Redford and Newman, with the camaraderie. So, we've got these two girls who share an apartment and fight a lot but they're good friends and they laugh a lot and Shirley has her dreams and maybe, underneath her cynicism, maybe Laverne has a few dreams, too."

Lee Winfrey of the Knight News Service singled out one of the most important motifs running through the series in an article that ran in various newspapers in February 1976. He referred to the premiere episode in which "Tad Shotz, whose Uncle Max owns the brewery, invited the girls to a swank society party with the observation that his uncle wanted him to "relate to the little people." . . . The casual abuse of Laverne and Shirley by the rich and better-placed . . . continued last week when Karen, a tour guide, tells visitors to the brewery: 'This is where the unskilled workers take their break. You don't even need a high school diploma (to work here). Laverne is in bottling. But don't worry, that girl's hand never touched the beer."

One of the things that both girls' hands frequently come in contact with is a bowling ball. Indeed, much of the action of the series is set in the Pizza Bowl, a combination bowling center and pizza joint owned by Laverne's father, played by Phil Foster. Both Laverne and Shirley are members of one of the Shotz Brewery's bowling teams. It was pointed out by J.T. Phillips of the Nashville Tennessean "the National Bowling Council was instrumental in arranging with the show's producers the use of bowling as an integral part of the program's storyline. The Council is also furnishing the program with technical advice, bowling equipment and memorabilia in the form of pictures and posters for the bowling center set."

Generally speaking, the series has bowled over most viewers. The following letters to the

Philadelphia Bulletin's "TV Answer Man" are typical reactions from "L & S" fans:

"Laverne and Shirley is a very funny show. Those two girls are great and I hope Fonzie is on the show a lot. — P.S.: Laverne and Shirley is hilarious. I laughed more at the first show than I have laughed in a week of TV viewing. — Mrs. H.V.

"The big comedy hit of the season is Laverne and Shirley. The comedy show is really funny and Penny Marshall and Cindy Williams are terrific. — B.D."

The paper's "Answer Man" commented himself: "The letters about Laverne and Shirley are starting to pour in and the consensus is favorable. Of all the letters, one complained about the leading ladies' hairdos, saying they weren't authentically the 1950s . . . but aside from that comment, the show was praised (overpraised might be a better word) to the hilt. For the record, Laverne and Shirley got the highest rating of a new show in ten years."

Certainly one of the chief reasons for the new series' success is Garry Marshall. Although a number of people, as indicated above, were involved in the creation of the program, Garry Marshall seems to have been the principal spirit behind the enterprise. He had previously created the highly popular "Happy Days," for which he is still an executive producer. Prior to that he was an executive producer for Paramount Television's "The Odd Couple" series, which he and Jerry Belson developed for television.

The team of Marshall and Belson earlier had written more than 100 situation comedy episodes for such series as the Danny Thomas Show, the Lucy Show and the original Dick Van Dyke Show. The pair won several writing awards, including the coveted Emmy for the Van Dyke series.

They showed their versatility by also writing segments for "I Spy" and the "Bob Hope Chrysler Theatre" drama series, and in creating the comedy series "Hey, Landlord!"

They also wrote and produced the motion picture "How Sweet It Is," which starred Debbie Reynolds and James Garner, and the critically-acclaimed feature film "The Grasshopper," in which Jacqueline Bisset was starred.

In 1969 they developed "Barefoot in the Park" for television. Garry Marshall created in 1972 a series called "The Little People," which starred Brian Keith and was filmed in Hawaii. It was later

re-named "The Brian Keith Show."

A native of New York City, Garry attended DeWitt Clinton High School. He later was graduated with a B.A. Degree in Journalism from Northwestern University, where he also formed his own jazz combo, playing the drums.

Entering the Army, he was sent to Korea as a member of the Army's Special Services Branch. There he became production chief for Armed Forces Radio Service. Working out of AFKN in Seoul, he wrote, produced and performed in various radio shows, and also appeared as a performer on Korean television. He also wrote for the newspaper "Star and Stripes" and for the Seoul News.

After having returned to civlian life, he joined the staff of the New York Daily News as a copy boy. Garry subsequently became a sports writer for the paper. In 1960 he left to join Jack Paar's writing staff on the old Tonight Show. Two years later, he left Paar to write for Joey Bishop's comedy series in Hollywood. a year later, he and Jerry Belson formed their writing team.

Commenting about "Laverne and Shirley" to the press, Garry said: "I feel the country misses Lucy very badly. So Laverne and Shirley get involved in Lucyish situations. But since the advent of Mary Richards, it's not cool for women on television to rely on a Desi to untangle their problems. So Laverne and Shirley are single, live together without men and rely on each other."

Comparing "L & S" to his previous hit, "Happy Days," Garry also remarked that "Laverne and Shirley' is much hipper than 'Happy Days'. They don't hang out at the malt shop. And the pizza place (which Laverne's father owns) is full of servicemen and hardhats."

Is the series, perhaps, too hip even for ABC-TV? In the same article Penny Marshall once confessed that the network censors "don't like the girls talking about sex." This meant, for example, that the phrase "putting out" was dumped, and in its place were references to "petting" and acting "very . . . friendly." Shirley's nickname "wait-for-the-wedding-night Feeney" was likely to be dropped, too. Cindy Williams asked "What could be cleaner than that?"

Penny went on to state "I thought we should wear black neckerchiefs, tight pants and have our hair in rollers most of the time. But ABC wants two nice girls and the ability to say 'Oh my, look at the situation they get in this week.' "

Perhaps the most succinct explanation for the series' popularity has been provided by Cindy Williams. She said "People are into nostalgia in a big way, and they also seem to like the idea that the two girls are best friends. It's a unique relationship on TV. Also, we have a great time slot, and ABC has promoted the hell out of the show."

The effect of "Laverne and Shirley" on "Happy Days" has been nothing short of tremendous.

Although that series had been a very popular one, with the advent of "L & S" the older program received a "transfusion" resulting in much bigger audiences than before. The girls helped breathe new life into "Happy Days." The projected spin-off from "Laverne and Shirley" will be called "Lenny and Squiggy In The Army," and will star truck-driving chums Michael McKean and David L. Lander If it debuts next season, there is likely to be the same audience interest thanks to "Laverne and Shirley" that the girls' series had going in because of "Happy Days." The cycle could be a never ending one for Paramount Television and ABC-TV□

FOCUS ON PENNY "LAVERNE" MARSHALL

Penny Marshall, in private life the wife of a popular television star (Rob Reiner), daughter of TV producer (Tony Marshall) and sister of one of Hollywood's most creative writer-director-producers (Garry Marshall), is on her way to carving her own stellar niche in show business.

Starring as Laverne De Fazio in Paramount Television's comedy hit "Laverne and Shirley" on ABC-TV, Tuesdays at 8:30 p.m. (ET), she displays herself as one of TV's brightest new comedic talents.

Penny, who has green eyes and brown hair, was born in New York City. Her birthday is October 15. Her father was an industrial film-maker at the time. Her mother, Marjorie, taught dancing.

She once recalled, in a Boston Globe interview by Percy Shain that "When I was a kid, I did the usual mischievous things. When I got scolded, I'd leave a note on the bed saying I was running away to Arizona or somewhere, then hide in the shower. Later, when I had a boy friend who was going to Ohio State, I said I wanted to head in that direction."

According to Penny, "My father wanted me to have an education in an out-of-state college, but my mother vetoed the idea of going to Ohio State, so I said 'How about New Mexico?' My mother's geography was poor and she thought it was nearer than Ohio. She even had the idea I might meet a Texas millionaire. That's how I wound up in Albuquerque."

After two years at the University of New Mexico, majoring in math and psychology, Penny withdrew to teach tap, toe and acrobatic dancing. That ended when she was offered a role in a summer stock company in Durango. The role was that of Ado Annie in "Oklahoma!" which she played for two seasons.

It was in New Mexico that Penny met and married her first husband, a football player. Her mother had always wanted her to marry a Jewish man, Penny revealed in a syndicated interview. "My mother sent me to a Kosher camp for 12 years beginning when I was nine. That's when she started teaching me that Jewish men make the best husbands," Penny said.

"People think I'm Jewish anyway. I've lost some parts because I was too Jewish for them, they told me," she went on to add. The football player she married, it turned out, wasn't Jewish. The match didn't work out, and a divorce followed.

Penny told the Boston Globe that her first husband's name "was Michael Henry, but he's not the Mike who made it to the big leagues. This one played for the New Mexico Lobos. I had gone to an all-girls high school and didn't have too many dates, so I was flattered by the attention he paid me. It didn't work out and we were soon divorced. As far as I know, he still lives in Arizona or some place."

The couple had one daughter, Tracy, who is now about 12 years old. She was adopted by Penny's second and current husband, actor Rob Reiner of "All In The Family." Penny and Rob were married in April 1971. "We were all set to get married on December 1, 1970, when Rob got the word that 'All In The Family' had been bought as a series and was to go into immediate production. So we had to wait until the following April when the first 13 episodes were completed," she has recalled in print.

Interestingly enough, Penny had auditioned for the role of Gloria, Rob Reiner's wife in "All In The Family." She failed, of course, to land it, and it went to Sally Struthers.

Talking about this in an interview, Penny

explained that, "It came down to four girls, and I was the tallest. The others were all cute little girls who looked as if they could be Archie Bunker's daughter. I was the only one who looked like she could be Edith's! I was older, too, and they said, 'She's not childlike.' They said I was too old to play opposite my own husband!"

Penny continued: "Maybe it's just as well. If we had been in the same show all these years, by now we'd have killed each other! To work together all day and then be together all night would have been too much."

The Marshall and Reiner families had been neighbors way back when in the Bronx, Penny has said. "We lived across the street from one another on opposite sides of the Grand Concourse. But after seven years he and his family moved to New Rochelle and we lost touch. Twenty years later we met again in Hollywood, at a lunch spot called the Beanery. At first glance, he didn't like me at all, but I guess he changed his mind. We lived together a year and a half before we were married. Sure, it's been great. Funny how things go. When we were kids, I was older than he was. But not now, I wonder how that happened.!"

Recalling those days as kids, Penny once confessed in an interview that when she and Rob were neighbors "I used to go to his father's place on Halloween, because Carl had a good reputation for treats, not tricks."

Carl Reiner, one of the funniest men in the history of television has been quoted as believing that his daughter-in-law Penny "has all the tools. She can be the clown one moment, all nutsy crazy, and be very touching the next. Probably the most surprising thing about Penny is that she's a totally coordinated person. The way she schlumps around, you forget that she's a trained dancer.

"Rob always told me she was funny and talented, but I never saw it because she's so quiet. I think success will be good for her. She's becoming more outgoing. Before, she had a very large light, I guess, but she had an extra large bushel to hide it under. She still has that big light, but the bushel is beginning to shrink."

Penny, talking about her husband, once commented "I'm too insecure. He's in a much

I like the role of Laverne because we're alike in some ways. I'm not as full of wisecracks as Laverne is. But like Laverne, I'm a realist.

better position in his head. He's sure he's right. I get too intimidated. I've had a lot of acting experience, but he exudes a lot more confidence. If I say, 'How about if I do this or that? and he says, 'No,' I say 'OK, OK.' In a situation like that I take everything personally. If he says, 'Don't move your hand that way,' I think, 'He hates me. The marriage is over. He won't come home tonight.' "

The marriage, of course, is a good one, and the Rob Reiners are today one of Hollywood's happiest and most successful couples. Like most performers who have achieved stardom, Penny spent years perfecting her craft.

After her first marriage had ended in New Mexico, Penny was faced with an important decision to make—what to do with the rest of her life! "I wound up teaching dancing in Albuquerque. Then I met some theatre people who got me to a little choreography and some performing for the local light opera. It was fun, but it wasn't anything I wanted to devote my life to.' Mostly, it provided me with a way to meet some guys. And in Albuquerque, which is a very small town, that was no little thing."

She recalled that "Most of the mothers wouldn't let their sons date me because I was a divorced woman with a kid. I didn't know what to do. I had no future in New Mexico, and if I went back to New York, my family would have treated me like a child. So I picked up a phone and called my brother in Hollywood."

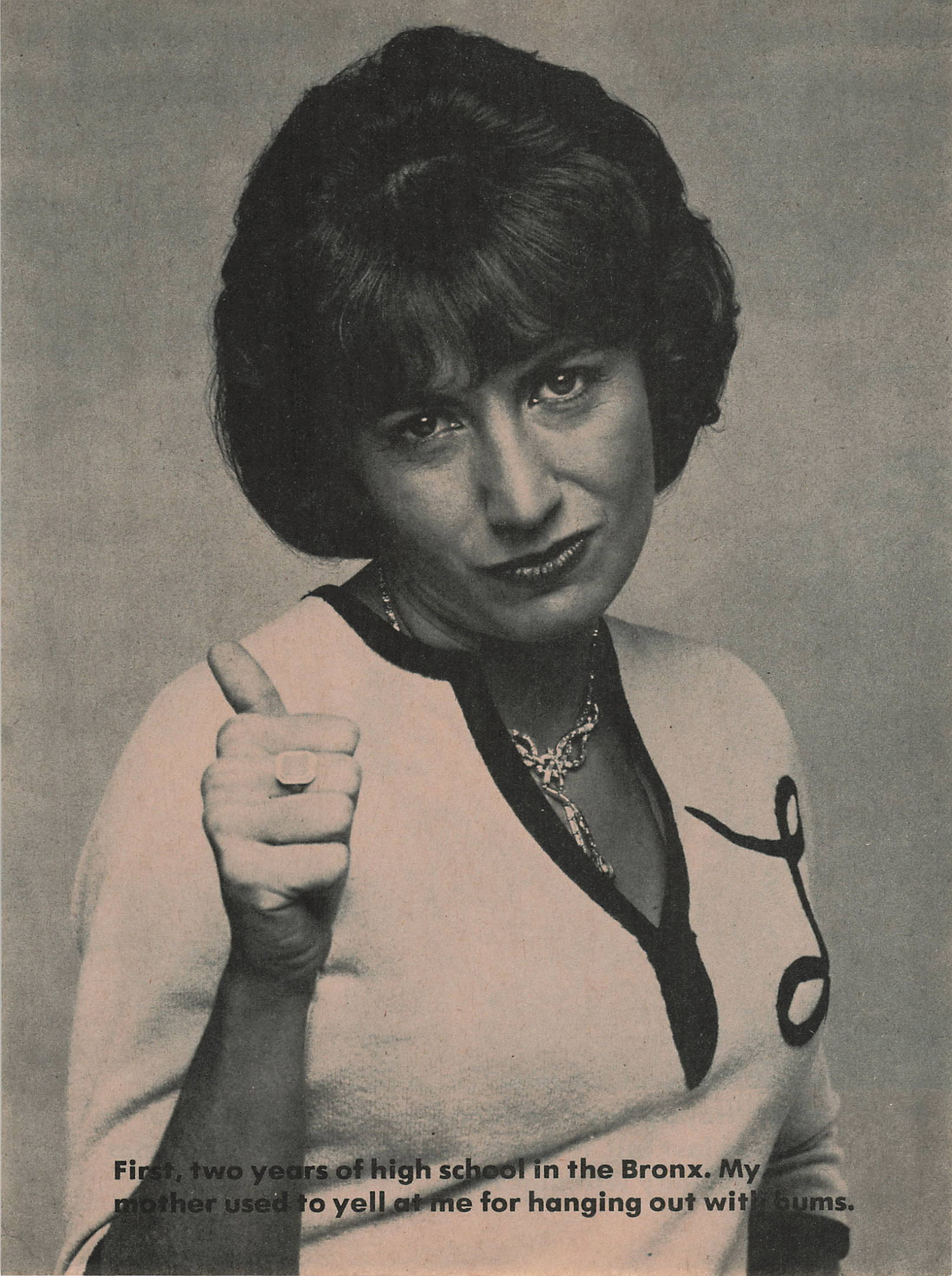
Although Garry and Penny are brother-and-sister, they really didn't know each other very well. Penny at 32 is some 10 years younger than her brother. When she was growing up at home in the Bronx, Garry was an undergraduate at Northwestern University and, following that, based in Korea as a member of the Army's Special Services Branch. So Penny wasn't exactly a familiar face to Garry Marshall.

Still, being a good brother—and, maybe, sensing the talent then still bottled up inside Penny—Garry encouraged her to come to Hollywood. When she arrived, he helped her get a bit part in a Danny Thomas Show comedy episode. She didn't exactly set the world on fire in that role or any of the other appearances she managed to land.

At the time, Garry was executive producer of the hit ABC-TV/Paramount Television series "The Odd Couple," starring Tony Randall and Jack Klugman. He had a hunch that Penny might be right for the role of Klugman's insecure secretary Myrna. She turned out to be nothing short of terrific!

"The Odd Couple" had a good run, after which Penny joined the cast of Paul Sand's "Friends and Lovers" series. There she played Sand's sharp-tongued sister-in-law. Although the series was well regarded by the critics, it failed to command high enough ratings to stay on the air. When it folded, Penny's career dipped, too. She continued to do guest appearances, and was seen on "Chico and the Man," "The Bob Newhart Show" and "The Mary Tyler Moore Show."

For a performer, this type of work is far from satisfying. It pays the grocery bills, true, but it doesn't provide the sense of involvement and satisfaction that comes from starring in and building your own hit series. Penny told Frank Torrez of the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner about this. "When I was doing only guest shots on other series," she said, "I would hate to sit at home waiting for the phone to ring. Then the arguments with my agent because he would say, 'No, don't take that offer—it's not a big enough part.' I would


First, two years of high school in the Bronx. My
mother used to yell at me for hanging out wit
ums.

When 'Happy Days' needed a couple of bimbos for an episode last fall, it was Garry who suggested I team up with Cindy Williams to do the bit.

Penny astride a would be purse snatcher (Neil Thompson). Bo Kaprall plays the cop who comes to their aid.

answer, 'But it's a part!''

How did Penny wind up as Laverne De Fazio? She told Percy Shain of The Boston Globe that ''A pilot I made with Garry called 'Wives' failed to sell. When 'Happy Days' needed a couple of bimbos for an episode last fall, it was Garry who suggested I team up with Cindy Williams to do the bit.''

Neither Penny nor Cindy ''Shirley'' Williams had been eager to appear on ''Happy Days'' as dates for Henry Winkler and Ron Howard. Cindy agreed to do it because she never expected a television series that would conflict with her budding movie career to result from the guest shot. Penny took on the role as a favor to her father, who was the producer of ''Happy Days,'' and her brother, its executive producer.

Penny once put it this way: ''I wasn't anxious to do anything, but my brother said my father was asking as a favor.'' She could have played either of the roles, but selected Laverne since, as she put it to the Philadelphia Inquirer, ''I'd look like Ronnie's [Howard's] mother!''

On ''Happy Days'' both Laverne and Shirley were presented as tough cookies or, to use the slang term for it, ''bimbos.'' The two characters were toned down somewhat in the ten-minute presentation film that was subsequently made to show ABC-TV programming executives what a series based on the two girls would look like.

Penny has previously pointed out that ''even in the presentation I sound different in the first half and the second half. I looked over at Cindy just before we began—we kind of improvised, all they said was, 'Don't cross this half of the stage'; as long as we stayed in place, we could do anything—and I said, 'I want to be short and cute, so I'll talk up here.' But when you do a series, you've got to be more like yourself. I brought my voice down, so it wasn't so 'cartoony.' ''

How does Penny regard Laverne? She once defined her character as ''a realist, who doesn't expect much out of life and has learned to accept. She wants better, but she gives up easily. She has no great fantasies and just wants to lead her own life.''

Trouble with Squiggy and Lennie (David L. Lander & Michael McKean).

"It's Shirley who is the dreamer and somewhat more vulnerable. There's a little of each in the other and that keeps them close even though they frequently quarrel. Maybe they're uncouth, but they're bright and vulnerable. The rough edges still show, but they're not as vulgar as they were."

Penny explained in print, "I like the role of Laverne because we're alike in some ways. I'm not as full of wisecracks as Laverne is. But like Laverne, I'm a realist. She would like to do better but she knows her niche."

Penny enlarges on this in a feature story released to newpapers by Paramount Television. She again cites Laverne as a realist who understands her niche in life, and Shirley as "a dreamer—sure her Prince Charming will come along." She continues: "This conflict in philosophies causes a lot of scraps between the girls, but it doesn't prevent them from being good friends. They'll fight anybody for each other.

"In some ways, like being a realist, I'm like Laverne. But, I'm more frightened about things—everything. I don't feel secure. Maybe if the show is a success, I'll have more confidence in myself." Certainly, in the months since that story was written, Penny must have found that extra confidence!

In the past, Penny's insecurity has surfaced in her newspaper publicity interviews. For instance, The Indianapolis Star headlined an NEA synidcated article about Penny: "HUGE SUCCESS WORRIES PENNY." In that piece she was quoted as saying "I always expect rejection, so I just worry if we can stay near the top."

She also confessed that growing up, "we all lived in a fantasy world. Maybe way down deep I always wanted what I have, but I also felt you had to be beautiful to get it. So I covered my fears by being funny."

Penny told The Rocky Mountain News "I'm really having trouble convincing myself that I'm a star of a television series. Most of the time I don't have much confidence in my acting. But I tell myself: 'Just keep fooling everybody. This sure beats typing as a secretary for a living.' "

Interviewed by Bill Kaufman for an article in Newsday's Sunday TV supplement, Penny revealed

She can be the clown one moment, all nutsy crazy, and be very touching the next.

"True, I'm like Laverne in many ways. I'm more frightened about things—everything. I don't honestly feel secure. But I do have a growing sense of well-being that has gradually grown from seeing the show become successful. You know the old cliche, you can't argue with success."

Penny and Cindy were both interviewed by Beth Slocum of The Milwaukee Journal when they visited the beer capital of the nation to see what the town in which "L & S" is set is really like. That article noted that Penny, "started out in the business with a huge inferiority complex and was afraid to work for anyone besides her brother." She was quoted as saying "I felt I had to wear a sign. I was burdened down with relatives."

Recalling her very early days with Ann Hodges of The Houston Chronicle. as a performer, she was discussing her two appearances as a member of the June Taylor Dancers on Jackie Gleason's popular Saturday night series. Gleason, she said, "sent us a dozen roses, and we had to put pancake on our tap shoes, and we were all dying with flu. I didn't want to be there at all. I wasn't pretty enough. At that point, I wanted to have 17 kids and live on a ranch. Now, I've discovered that would never have worked, because I can't get up until noon."

Discussing the characters Laverne and Shirley and the 1959 setting for the series with Ms. Hodges, Penny declared "I'm older than either one of them, but age doesn't matter. I live in a regressive period anyway. I still call friends I went to junior high school with, and I still totally recall that aspect of my life. It wasn't a happy period. I looked like a coconut. Ponytails weren't my thing, and I wasn't popular. Did I have fun? I guess. I don't remember, after all."

The same subject came up once in an interview Penny did with Jack Allen, TV Editor of The Buffalo Courier Express. "What do I recall of the '50s?" she asked herself. "First, two years of high school in the Bronx. My mother used to yell at me for hanging out with bums. Then I went to the University of New Mexico. I thought I was a hip chick from the big city. But those far kids were hipper."

Talking to the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, Penny has confided "I'd rather go through the grind of a weekly series than sit at home filled with insecurity and boredom."

Remembering the 1950s, Penny once told Harry Harris of The Philadelphia Inquirer: "I remember my mother yelling at me, 'Stop hanging out on the fence with the bums!' I thought I knew it all, from the streets of the Bronx. I was part of the

When I was a kid, I did the usual mischievous things. When I got scolded, I'd leave a note on the bed saying I was running away to Arizona or somewhere, then hide in the shower.

in' crowd, though in the fifties you had to be 'built,' and I wasn't. They guys used to tell me who 'put out' and I figured if they'd tell me about other girls, they'd tell other girls about me. I worried about my reputation. But I didn't want to date steady anyway, because I didn't want to miss anything that happened at the hangout."

Perhaps her best comment relating to insecurity surfaced in Harry Harris' article. Penny reminded him "One thing about working with your father and your brother: they're not going to let you die out there! And maybe it's an advantage that Garry and I sound alike. He can read my part any time!"

Despite all of her doubts and fears, Penny Marshall has made it to the top. She's the star of one of television's biggest hits in years. Millions of fans love her and want to see more of her. It only seems fair to advise Penny that she's got nothing to worry about! ●

FOCUS ON CINDY "SHIRLEY" WILLIAMS

The tradition in Hollywood is that all actors and actresses want to do motion pictures rather than television. Given a chance to choose, most performers will opt for the big screen rather than the tube. After all, the tradition has always been that fame and fortune come to those who make it big in movies. TV has frequently been the medium for those not good enough to play in the major leagues.

Well, that's not necessarily true today. Times have certainly changed, and a good example of how radical a change has taken place can be seen in Cindy Williams.

Cindy, of course, has achieved stardom playing Shirley Feeney opposite Penny Marshall's Laverne De Fazio on "Laverne and Shirley." A regular role in a television series, however, was the last thing in the world that Cindy wanted for herself. Indeed, she needed quite a bit of persuasion before she agreed to give up her then thriving career in motion pictures.

Cindy scored her first important success in George Cukor's "Travels With My Aunt," which starred Maggie Smith. She was well regarded in that comedy, but her biggest pictures were yet to come. Next she was cast in George Lucas' "American Graffiti," in which she played Ron Howard's girlfriend Laurie.

Just as Ron Howard's career took off thanks to his performance in "American Graffiti," Cindy found that the film's staggering success brought her the attention and consideration as an actress that she had been after for many years.

Some heavier dramatic roles followed for Cindy. Francis Ford Coppola, who had scored strongly as director of "The Godfather," had personally helped George Lucas obtain financing for "American Graffiti." Impressed with Cindy's performance in the picture, Coppola cast her as the female lead in his picture "The Conversation," where she played opposite Academy Award winner Gene Hackman.

"The Conversation," unfortunately, did not set new records at the box office. Although it was one of Coppola's best efforts, and was exceedingly well performed, it failed to excite audiences despite its electronic surveilance theme. Cindy's performance, however, captured new

Just who does Eddie Mekka remind you of? No, not him. He plays the sometimes romantically inclined Carmine Ragusa.

audience attention and critical bouquets.

Turning to television, Cindy starred in the film "The Migrants," in which she was reunited with Ron Howard. She also guest-starred in such TV series as "Petrocelli," "Police Story," "Hawaii Five-O" and "Room 222."

It all culminated in her guest-starring role with Penny Marshall in the "Happy Days" episode which introduced Laverne and Shirley as dates for Henry Winkler and Ron Howard. Based on that one guest-shot, ABC-TV decided there was a definite series to be produced around the characters of the two bimbos from the Milwaukee brewery. The question was how to get Cindy and Penny to commit themselves to the rigors of making a weekly television series.

"I'd been turning down series for two years," Cindy told Ann Hodges of The Houston Chronicle. "I really didn't want to do TV. I wanted to do movies." She had agreed to do the "Happy Days" appearance only because it was a one-shot deal.

Cindy, recalling her three movie appearances in succession, explained "That's one reason I was reluctant to do a series. The movies were going too well. I didn't even like TV, and I rarely watched it."

When ABC-TV and Paramount Television decided they wanted to do "Laverne and Shirley as a series, Cindy said no at first. What changed her mind, interestingly enough, was something in her personal off-screen life.

That "something" was the fact that she was then dating Henry Winkler. Henry had already achieved overnight stardom as Fonzie, following many years of hard work and training as an actor in the legitimate theatre. Suddenly, he couldn't take two steps without busloads of fans descending upon him for autographs.

"Everywhere we'd go, he was mobbed by young girls," Cindy has been interviewed as saying "I hadn't seen his show, and I couldn't understand it. But I finally watched one night and then I understood."

What Cindy had at last come to grips with was the fact that Hollywood success today is predicated upon the kind of enormous nationwide exposure that only television can provide. Whereas in the past, movies were the mass medium through which performers came to be known, television is today the only surefire way to make someone's face instantly recognizable anywhere in the country or, indeed, the world. After Cindy understood this from her first-hand experience as Fonzie's girlfriend in real life, she found it much easier to make the right decision about doing "Laverne and Shirley."

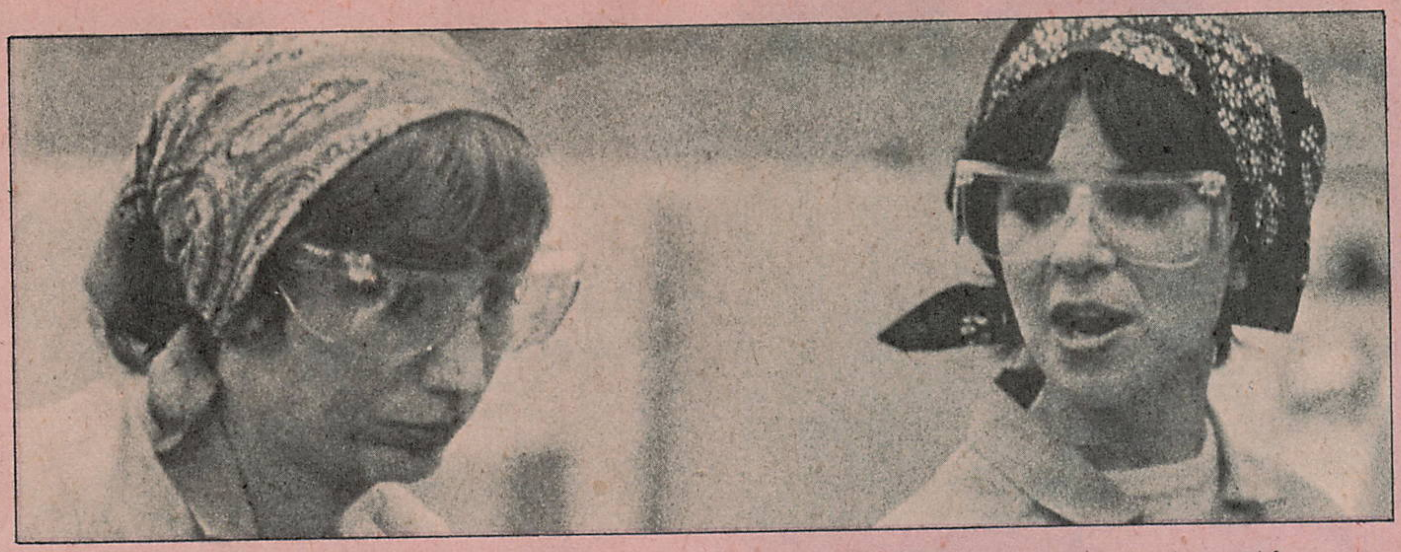
She also felt comedy is something that's really important to people in these difficult times. "Gee, the news is so morbid these days, if you can make people laugh like that it's real consciousness raising," she once noted.

Cindy has put it this way: "At first, I turned down the series—because of all those other things I was planning. Then they came back to me again, this time with a script that developed the characters more and showed the possibilities. That sold me."

She rounded out her reasoning in another interview, saying, "Garry Marshall had asked Penny and me as a favor to do an episode of 'Happy Days,' playing these two tough cookies. They were fun parts, so we did them. Then somebody got the idea of building a series around those two girls. I wasn't interested, because my movie career was going pretty well, what with 'The Conversation' and 'American Graffiti.' But my manager convinced me that it wouldn't hurt my career, and ABC offered an amount of money I didn't know existed."

How have the Laverne and Shirley roles changed since the first 'Happy Days' appearance? "The original girls were a good deal, shall we say, cheap. After some meetings and experimentation on our part they were raised a few notches. There's less bimbo and more lady in them than originally was drawn in the characterization. There's also more warmth to them," Cindy once said.

In a syndicated interview by Don Shirley,



Cindy has pointed out that "It's comedy that's been around since the word was invented. We're playing sketch and farce mixed together. It's much faster clipped than today's comedy. It's set-up, set-up punch. Stuff we wanted to do since we saw Lucille Ball. Stuff that had been done hundreds of years before us. We did one 'message' episode—it didn't turn out too well."

If Cindy sounds like she knows something about writing as well as acting that's true. She aspires to be a writer, too. "I'm in the middle of a screen play that I'm writing now, I hope for a movie," she explained in a Paramount Television feature article distributed recently to newspapers in key cities throughout the country.

Something of the writer is evident in this comment previously made by Cindy, "In a series, you get a little deeper with the characters. They start to fill out and become warmer . . . you relax a little. We went into 'Happy Days' cold, with no understanding of a series. It was just: Doin' anything this week? Wanna do a 'Happy Days' and play a cheap girl?

Interviewed on another occasion, Cindy commented "I thought the series would be on 13 weeks, and then I would be free. When it hit, I didn't know what to think."

She also said, "I didn't want to do a series. I was frightened at the thought of it. I thought about overexposure and about losing out on a movie career. Then, after they had tested four or five other girls for my part, they made another offer. My manager and agent tried to talk me into it, and I still said no. I wanted a chance at movies, and they said there's no such thing."

Cindy countered, she went on, by demanding some things from Paramount Television that she never expected to receive. "It happened to be during a very depressing week for me," she remembered. "They gave me everything I wanted, and so I took it. Penny and I each wanted first billing. I said, let's rotate it, she agreed, and it was settled. It was the first time I didn't care about the money. I was more interested in pursuit of seven years of a picture career. But then I figured the series would be better than working at the International House of Pancakes where I was seven years ago."

"I thought the series would be on 13 weeks, and then I would be free. When it hit, I didn't know what to think."

Cindy and Penny, it's been reported, get along quite well, but outside of the Paramount Studios they rarely see each other. How does Cindy see her role in comparison to Penny's role? She has been quoted as saying that "At first I thought the role of Shirley Feeney would be that of the straight woman. Laverne De Fazio would get the tough lines. I'd set 'em up and she'd knock 'em over. But they've written for me an attitude that will carry the role. This is like a total sibling rivalry between two girls."

She also stated that the series is "getting

I'd set 'em up and she'd knock 'em over.

warmer since the opener. Better situations. We had never worked together before. The first show was a big rush. The script was changed right up until shooting."

Cindy, herself, gets generally excellent reviews from the critics. This comment from Buck Biggers syndicated King Features column in The Baltimore News American is typical: "Cindy Williams is Shirley. We have predicted big things for this blue-eyed brunette since that night several years ago when we saw her portray Ron Howard's girl friend in 'American Graffiti.' For an actress of such tender years, she is marvelously adroit at making the most of her talents, especially in terms of provoking laughter."

Cindy has, however, received at least one spanking in print—at the hands of Bill Diehl, entertainment columnist for The St. Paul Dispatch. He took exception to Cindy's participation in an R rated picture called "The First Nudie Musical," released by Paramount Pictures in the spring of 1976.

Diehl had written: "I cannot, for the life of me, understand why some of these performers let themselves appear and participate in such tasteless, disgusting, revolting items as First Nudie Musical' . . . . If she has a brain in her head and any sense of responsibility to her public now applauding 'Laverne and Shirley,' Cindy must regret her hungry decision to appear in 'Nudie Musical,' which certainly could not advance her promising career."

Her role in the strictly adult movie also drew Cindy attention in Marilyn Beck's syndicated Hollywood column. Ms. Beck, in The Houston

I really didn't want to do TV. I wanted to do movies.

Chronicle, reported "though Cindy keeps her clothes on throughout, her dialogue is a lot less restrictive than the lines she's allowed to use on her Family Hour series." She warned that "fans will be getting a different impression of Cindy Williams when they see her in" the R-rated picture.

When the film opened in Los Angeles it was reviewed by Kevin Thomas of The Los Angeles Times: He commented: "A gifted actress currently starring in the "Laverne and Shirley" TV series, Miss Williams is quite a few cuts above everyone else in the film. (Indeed, one wonders why an established performer such as herself would become involved in a project so obviously fraught with peril to the serious artist.)"

As for the film itself, Thomas' opinion was: "Silly, sophomoric, at times downright inept, this little low-budget venture picked up by Paramount is more often than not hilarious, offering good, tonic laughter to those not offended by nudity and blunt language . . . . strictly soft core, if even that."

For Cindy the controversial picture represents just one more experience as a professional actress. She certainly didn't do the film for the money, or the exposure. But it does figure that she would agree to help a friend out and, at the same time, add another type of motion picture to her impressive list of credentials.

Cindy, who was born in Van Nuys, Calif., had wanted to be an actress since her junior high school days. She had moved with her parents to Irving, Texas at an early age and lived there for

The men and women who are responsible for the success of "Laverne & Shirley." How many can you name?

That "something" was the fact that she was then dating Henry Winkler.

nine years before returning to Van Nuys, a suburb of Los Angeles.

In junior high and then while attending Birmingham High School, she first displayed an interest in acting as a star of school plays, for some of which she also wrote and directed. She continued her interest in acting as a theatre arts major at Los Angeles City College.

Before being bitten with the theatre bug, Cindy had another career interest. "I wanted to be a nurse. I saw drama in it, but the sight of blood was my downfall," she once confessed in an interview.

During college and after, while studying drama, she worked as a waitress, receptionist and at other odd jobs. Her first professional performances came in minor TV roles and led to her being selected for gradually more important parts in both motion pictures and TV.

Her first real break came when she was cast as a teen-age wife in "The Funny Side," a television series hosted by Gene Kelly.

"It wasn't so funny one time,' according to Cindy. "I was dancing with Gene, and I stepped—hard—on his foot. I was so embarrassed, but he just went right on as though nothing had happened. He's a real gentleman."

Gene Kelly, of course, made his mark in the entertainment world in the golden age of motion pictures. Cindy Williams is truly a child of the television age. She put her finger on how times have changed when in one previously published interview she remembered how her first-rate movie roles had failed to win her real audience recognition. But after two weeks on television with "Laverne and Shirley" "everyone seemed to know me from the series. It makes you wonder after hearing all those years that recognition is in the movies. You find it in TV . . . . Now, I feel the success of the series will help, not hurt my picture career."

Cindy, who is only in her late 20s now, clearly has many years ahead of her as one of television's top-rated actresses. She should be juggling movie and TV roles for years to come! ●

FOCUS ON PHIL "DeFAZIO" FOSTER

I feel the country misses Lucy very badly. So Laverne and Shirley get involved in Lucyish situations.

There's an old show business saying that goes something like this: Be nice to people you meet on the way up. They're the same people you meet on the way down. Fortunately for Phil Foster, he followed that golden rule years ago and helped a young writer get his first big break. The writer was Garry Marshall, who has since repaid the favor by casting Phil as Penny Marshall's father in "Laverne and Shirley."

Phil has been around for decades, having started in television in the late 1940s. In the early '50s, when TV was still in its childhood era, Phil was seen regularly on the old Tallulah Bankhead Show. He did three years of radio with Tallulah, and one television year.

The program Tallulah starred in was a variety show, in which Phil was teamed with comedienne Patsy Kelly as a Brooklyn couple. "We were the original Honeymooners," he told Dan Lewis in a syndicated interview that appeared in The St. Louis Globe-Democrat on March 20, 1976. "Our TV show also was the forerunner of what became the established format for variety for nearly two and a half decades."

Phil first met Garry Marshall when he [Phil] was working in network radio. "Fifteen years ago I was doing Monitor radio on NBC, 15 to 20 shows on a weekend, and I began to run out of material," he explained to syndicated columnist Earl Wilson for a piece that ran in the Detroit Free Press. "A kid comes in, Garry Marshall, he's 23, with another kid, Red Friedman, and they want to write material. I said, 'Write me five pieces, I'll look at it.' They came back with 10 pieces. I thought they were great. They were wild but they had a touch of reality."

The favor Phil did for Garry followed. "On the coast Joey Bishop needed some young writers. I sent them out there. Garry Marshall and Friedman broke up, but Garry stayed on with Joey Bishop," he remembered for Earl Wilson. The rest, of course, is television history. Garry's success with series like "The Odd Couple," "Happy Days" and "Laverne and Shirley" places him in the top ranks of the mediums's most creative and successful producers.

As for the early days with Tallulah, Phil told Wilson: "My first series was with Tallulah Bankhead, 'The Big show,' that they did at the Center Theater, which they tore down. Goodman Ace was the writer. Tallulah used to be in her cups all the time. She didn't understand me. She would say, 'You must be funny, they tell me you are.' She said, 'Could you bring your muthuh in to see me?' My mother didn't understand Tallulah. She said, 'Hello, Honolulu, how come a nice girl like you isn't married?' We were ahead

of our time. Then Sid Caesar started a series, but switched the format at the last minute and we had a terrible flop. I have been very quiet for about the last 10 years."

Phil Foster made his debut as a nightclub, stand-up comedian in Chicago in the late 1930s. Born in Brooklyn some 60 years ago, he had his first taste of performing when, as a kid, he and his pals began singing and dancing in front of movie theaters. Then he began appearing in amateur shows, competing for prizes. With him occasionally was another beginner named Jackie Gleason!

At the height of the Depression, he started in the dramatic field, playing in halls, back-rooms and wherever possible during a period when theatres weren't available. "We did all sorts of plays, including all of Clifford Odets' early

plays—for $28 to $35 a week, living three in a room, eating if there was any food around," he recalls in his Paramount Television biography.

Phil's first Chicago nightclub experience came when he was pushed out on the floor suddenly to fill in for a stand-up comic. "I just got up and talked," he says. "I didn't know you were supposed to have an act. But I was offered the job—at $125 a week."

He always thought he'd go back to acting but, staying with the money, he rapidly made a reputation in nightclubs and found himself in steady demand from New York to Atlanta to Des Moines. "Most stand-up comedians actually are very good actors, but once you get that reputation in clubs people are inclined to forget you also can be an actor," according to Phil.

Phil is the typical Brooklyn good-will ambassador. Indeed, in his nightclub performances after World War II he was actually billed as "Brooklyn's Ambassador to the United States." His routines were based on life in that borough of New York, and one of his best loved acts revolved around the then Brooklyn-based Dodgers.

In the 1950s Phil was cast in some television pilots, but nothing sold. He bounced around the guest-star circuit, appearing on the many variety programs that television boasted in those days. The nightclub scene and the variety series both started to lose some of their glitter in the '50s. Things got quiet for Phil.

He appeared in the motion picture "Bang The Drum Slowly," and received excellent reviews for his performance. But the film failed to excite much box office interest, so his career never got the badly needed shot-in-the-arm it might have gotten from a smash hit movie. He also worked in television commercials for a carpet store, a hair-dye for men, and others.

Phil noted for Dan Lewis that "I had given up the idea of ever getting a series. I had enough work in the East so I was not hurting financially. Just hurting for the desire to do a series, for the

personal feeling that I wasn't fulfilled. So I became a good golfer in the East."

Years before Phil had helped Garry Marshall get started as a writer. He told him at the time, according to Earl Wilson's column, "You owe me nothing, but just remember to pass the favor along to somebody else." What Garry did was to give the favor right back to Phil!

When "Laverne and Shirley" was starting production the producers realized it would be helpful to have the character of Laverne's father, Frank De Fazio, visible each week. He runs the Pizza Bowl, where most of the series' action takes place. Garry called Phil, who was then living in New Jersey, and convinced him to fly to Hollywood to do the part.

In an interview in The Tampa Times, Phil explained: "I wasn't ever a regular on a series before. I always did my shot and then it was over. Then Garry Marshall called me one day and asked me to come talk to him since he's the executive producer of the show. I got him his first job writing for Joey Bishop and I trust him so I went."

"We didn't even talk about money. For the first three weeks I didn't know what I was getting paid. That made a problem because I didn't take any money with me, so for three

Cindy and Penny with Garry Marshall who plays Penny's brother. Garry is also executive director of the show as well as "Happy Days."

Penny and Cindy are joined by (from left to right) Phil Foster as Frank De Fazio, David (Squiggy) Lander, and Eddie (Carmine) Mekka.

"I play a typical Italian father of the 1950s. The Italian fathers were the last to lose the kids in those days. They had a pretty strong hold on the family."

Laverne & Shirley with friend.

weeks I scrounged off the cast," Phil continued. "The kids knew I was hurting so they would invite me out to dinner, loan me a fiver here and there. My 'old friends' weren't calling as the ratings weren't out. Now that the show is a hit I'm hearing from guys who wouldn't return my calls a year ago."

How does he regard his role? "I play a typical Italian father of the 1950s. The Italian fathers were the last to lose the kids in those days. They had a pretty strong hold on the family."

In The Tampa Times he discussed how it is working with Cindy Williams and Penny Marhsall: "On this show I find myself with two kids who were never exposed to comedy the way I was, but they do things that make great teams. I watch them with my mouth hanging open. It's like working with greats like Phil Silvers and Hank Henry in their golden days. And it's because they react to their instincts at the moment, not just to some director's word."

How does it feel to be a star again? In the same interview Phil admitted: "It's got to change some things. But money was never my God. I lost a lot of chances because I won't bend and say 'yes, sir.' I had too much of that in the army. And if people start to bother me on the street, that don't bother me. When I was first starting out I used to leave the makeup on all day so people would know I was an actor. When I hear some 'big star' say 'I wish people would leave me along,' I say, 'I hope they do.' "

In addition to his television series co-starring role, Phil is also pursuring a writing career. To date he has completed his first play and two story outlines for furture projects. In New York City he also runs a workshop called "The Foster Children," where he works without pay with young people. "They have new, fresh ideas and I love helping them get started," is how he puts it. "The only thing I ask in return in that, when these youngsters are established, they help others on their way."

If that sounds familiar, it's because it's turned out to be the story of Phil Foster's own life in show business.□

...ors,

In your next issue will you please ...icles on Laverne & Shirley.

Plus Do you think you ... or seperc...

of them like the!

...sopher's Path
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MIT LUFTPOST
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Gentlemen:

One of the guys in ... our barricks brought ... a copy of TV Favor... here and it ... enjoyed ... pa...

May 26, 1976

Dear Editors,

My name is Kirsten Lambdin, I'm 19 years old and ... just finished reading your first issue ... Favorites. All I can say is wow! ... of "Happy Days" and "Welcome ... zine

Dear Sir,

I enjoyed your last magazine on "The Fonz" and "Welcome Back Kotter". The next edition I think I would like to read about "Starsky and Hutsch" Could you please send me "The Fonz" or Henry Winkler's address. It wou... mean alot to me. Please answer this if I can have it or you do... have it. Thanks a... Andre...

North Belt ...

...e fortunate enough to ... of your magazine whic... brought back from the ...ates. We would sure lik... much if you would plea... story about Ron Howard. ... had a picture of Henry Win... how about one on Ron Hou... the rest of the cast at pl... beach.

ya B...

Dear Editor:

this is Julie Toronto Canada ... love it if ... magazine ...

WE GET LETTERS

r Sirs,

I enjoy your "to-
orites" very much. Especially
"Happy Days". But there
s one thing I wish you
would do. Please print
more on Cindy Williams. I
love her and the part she
plays on her show. I have
about 10 framed pictures of her
A [illegible] head board of my

Dear Sirs;

We are writing to complain that in your last issue featuring "Fonzi" and the "Kotter Gang", you did not have an article on Robert Hegyes. (Epstein) He is also part of the Kotter Gang and we would like to see an article about him. We were very disappointed. Otherwise your magazine was very good.

Sincerely,
Pam Reiter
+
Johnna Walter

ne 6
your first
Favorites". Having a
[illegible] on all my favorite people
[illegible] like a dream come true. I
really liked all of the pictures and
I loved the poster.

You made a few mistakes
about Henry Winkler and Ron
Palillo. You said Henry Winkler
was 28, he is 30. But when you
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ANOTHER OSMOND FAMILY SMASH HIT

"DONNY & MARIE"

"Donny and Marie" arrived as part of ABC-TV's January 1976 mid-season replacement battalion. Other members of the attack squad included "Laverne and Shirley," "The Bionic Woman" and "Rich Man, Poor Man." It's now part of television history that ABC's programming changes proved to be enormously successful. "Donny and Marie," for example, drew impressive audiences right from the start against its stiff NBC-TV competition, "Sanford and Son," starring Red Foxx.

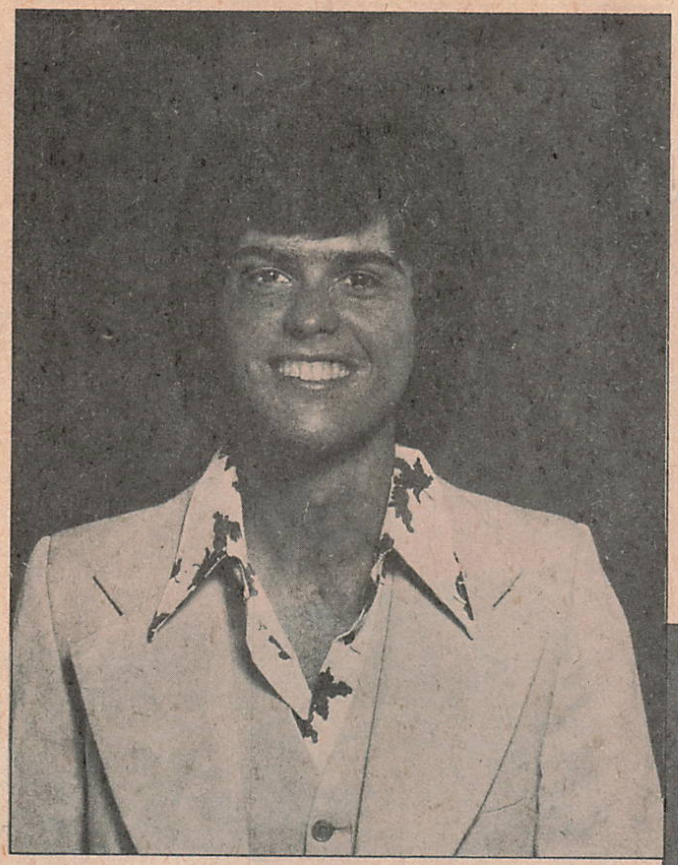
Donny and Marie Osmond had already scored for ABC with a top-ten rated special, "Donny and Marie Osmond Show." Their new mid-season series was, to an extent, a spin off of that special, and, in another sense, a spin off from their highly successful career as recording artists, nightclub performers and TV stars.

In "Donny and Marie" the weekly bill of fare includes an assortment of musical/variety acts. There's a strong emphasis on comedy. Indeed, Paul Lynde was signed to guest star in seven of the series first 13 episodes. In addition, the popular Osmond Brothers also add their sparkle to the series.

Donny and Marie also share the weekly spotlight for the Ice Vanities, a new chorus and skating act under the direction of Olympic Champion skater Bob Paul. The brother-sister team's series features weekly music concerts, showcasing the pop/rock and country music talents of the two hosts, who also take part in humorous sketches with a repertory company of comedic actors.

The lyrics of Donny and Marie's million selling record "Morning Sid of the Mountain" begin: "There was a girl/there was a boy . . . " But Donny and Marie are not just another boy and girl. They have blossomed into show business from one of the nation's most talented, musically-inclined families—The Osmonds.

Labeled as the first brother and sister act ever to have their own national TV series, Donny and Marie have "paid their dues" over long years of hard work in the entertainment industry. They have guest-starred, for example, on over 50 major television shows and specials, earning the respect and admiration of their fellow performers.



Show business is nothing new to either of them. It's a part of everyday life in the Osmond household—at the dinner table, in the car, and in countless family huddles. Donny and Marie both say they can't recall when their older brothers were not in show business!

The Osmond Family today includes Alan, Wayne, Merrill, and Jay, the first performers in the family; Donny and Marie and their youngest brother Jimmy; two non-performing brothers, Virl and Tom; and their parents, George and Olive.

As entertainers, the family's story dates back to 1958, when Alan, Wayne Merrill and Jay first sang in Ogden, Utah as part of the Family Home Evening Program of the Church of Jesus Christ of

22 gold records adorn the hallway of the Osmond family home in Provo, Utah.

Latter-day Saints (Mormon). They later performed for weddings, civic groups and a local barbershop association.

Their father, a successful real estate and insurance broker, then took the Osmond Brothers on several tours. A few years later, in 1962, while appearing at Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif., just south of Los Angeles, the Osmonds were seen by the late Jay Williams. He recommended them to his son, Andy, who was then the host of his own series, "The Andy Williams Show."

After a few guest appearances, Andy invited the brothers to become regulars on his series. They then moved to California. At this point

Donny and Marie have "paid their dues" over long years of hard work in the entertainment industry.

It took the Osmonds nine years of performing and singing before their first rock hit appeared on the scene.

Donny and Marie were still off in the future. Both were still youngsters.

Donny, who was then five years old, had been imitating Andy Williams singing "You Are My Sunshine." He was given a guest shot on Andy's program, and was subsequently invited to join Andy and the Osmond Brothers on tour in Allentown, Pa.

Four years later, while the family was on tour in Sweden, seven year old Marie was added to the act. Until then the family had called the group The Osmond Brothers. Now, a new name was necessary. They became known as, simply, The Osmonds.

Jimmy, the youngest member of the group, joined the team ten years ago at the very tender age of three!

Today, the family consists of five distinct entertaining entities: The Osmond Brothers; Donny and Marie as a team; Donny Osmond; Marie Osmond; and Jimmy Osmond. Jay Osmond has, most recently, also done some single work on his own.

With so many recording stars in one family, it's no wonder that 22 gold records adorn the hallway of the Osmond family home in Provo,

Ahh, romance!

Utah. The glittering discs represent some 65 million record sales, which is a fabulous achievement.

The fact that Donny and Marie as a pair have become one of the hottest acts in entertainment today reflects well on the family's understanding of how to develop and evolve as an act. "It was a family decision that Marie and I join forces to create another act in the family," according to 18 year old Donny. "We get along so well there was no reason for us not to do our own thing musically."

Marie, who made her singing debut in 1972 on her brother's Las Vegas stage show, is in her own right a fast-rising singing and TV star. Although she's only 16 years old, she already has one gold record, "Paper Roses," to her credit. She explains, "I was a bit worried at first—with Donny having literally millions of fans himself—that I might not be accepted by his followers. But it's worked out just the opposite. Even though the audience still expects us to 'do our own thing,' they also expect to see us together now."

What is the best way to describe the Osmond's musical style? "We started out in the barbershop vein with four-part harmony," Alan Osmond says, "and we grew from there." Donny's style has been called "a little bit rock 'n' roll," while Marie's approach has been termed "a little bit country." Neither of them disputes this.

A look at some of the Osmond's records bears this out. Although they started on TV with Andy Williams in 1962, it took the Osmonds nine long years of performing and singing before their first rock hit appeared on the scene. That was "One Bad Apple," and featured Donny singing the lead. Later hits by Donny included his versions of such pop standards as "Go Away Little Girl" (1971), "Puppy Love" (1972) and "Twelth of Never" (1973). All were certified as gold records.

Marie's "Paper Roses" scored as a gold album and as a gold single in 1973. She has also struck gold teamed with Donny with "I'm Leaving It All Up To You" (1974) and "Morning Side of the Mountain" (1975). Marie's other albums are "In My Little Corner of the World" and "Who's Sorry Now," from which singles with the same titles were also issued.

The Osmond Family ties are as strong off-screen as they appear to be on-screen. "I know it must seem to a lot of people that there'd be

animosity with Marie or myself out front," Donny explained in an interview. "But everything we do is family decision. All of my brothers are involved in this show. To us, it doesn't matter who's out front, as long as it's an Osmond. That's why I doubt if either myself or Marie would ever go out as a solo. We're all part of the family."

He added that, "we're proud of being a close family. That's really how we got started in music. We'd have family nights where everyone would make up a song and we'd take turns being masters-of-ceremony. We used to sit up nights just thinking of new songs to do. We considered family nights very important."

Marie remarked, "I think it's sad that most families don't seem to get along as well as we do. I suppose you just have to learn where to put your priorities. With us, our family comes first." And Donny declared, "If we had to give up our success tomorrow, we would do it for our family." That, however, doesn't appear to be a

choice that either Donny or Marie will be faced with having to make.

Off stage Donny and Marie don't tease one another as they do on television. "We like to play around and joke like anyone else," according to Marie, "but we know when to draw the line before the joking turns into hurting wise-cracks."

Not only do the brother and sister get along well in real life, they are extremely close to their other brothers, the wives of the three married performing Osmonds, and their parents.

George and Olive have been married for 32 years. They met shortly after George got out of the service in 1944, and applied for a job in an office where Olive was working as a secretary. Within one year they were married. Virl, the first of their nine children, arrived the next year. Virl and Tom, the family's two non-performing brothers, both suffer from hearing ailments.

The Osmond Family has a large ranch in northern Utah where they sometimes vacation away from their entertainment activities. While their television series is being taped in Los Angeles, the family moves its base there. At other times, the Osmonds' home is in a large apartment building they own in Provo, Utah, near Brigham Young University.

All of the Osmonds are deeply involved in their Mormon faith. Olive Osmond once explained how religion had played an important part in getting the Osmonds started. "I had read in one of the church books," she said, "one of the old prophets had suggested families have one night a week devoted to themselves, to forget all their business and outside cares. So every Friday we started having Family Night. I'd fix dinner by candlelight. The kids would tear home from school for this party! And after dinner, the entertainment would be kids performing. They'd practice all week, learning their music to have a different song to sing, or a different tune to play.

I guess that's where their music began, way back when they were toddlers."

She explained that she and her husband had taught the kids in those days how to sing their parts, using an old wire recorder so they could hear themselves. They enjoyed it so much they frequently wound up singing in bed at night!

Many years have passed since those early days, and the Osmonds's careers have taken off like gangbusters! Donny and Marie are showing millions of television viewers each week that there is nothing wrong with being clean-cut. Donny has been quoted on that subject as saying, "I don't know, we hear people calling us clean-cut as if there were something wrong with that. I just don't happen to think there's anything wrong with being clean-cut."

Donny and Marie and, indeed, all the Odmonds have an enormous following around the world. There is even a fan magazine devoted entirely to the Osmonds, entitled "Osmond World," which is published in England. It is estimated that there are over a half million Osmond fans in the world, with an active 100,000 in the U.S. and Canada and another 100,000 active fans in England. Not bad for a bunch of clean-cut singer-performers!•

TV FAVORITES

FOCUS ON

THE OSMONDS

Everything we do is a family decision.

If the Osmonds were not all members of the same family we'd probably be much more knowledgeable about them as indivjduals. Just like we all got to know who the Beatles were, we'd know who the Osmonds were if they had individual identities. While this is true to a greater extent where Donny and Marie are concerned, the Osmonds as a group have an overall image rather than individual images. We think of the Osmonds as one entity rather than a combination of seven performing talents and several backstage talents.

We're going to focus on the six Osmond brothers and their very special sister. Read on and you'll get to know each member of the group.

Donny Osmond is probably the single most famous member of the family group. Although he's only 18 years old, Donny already brings 14 years of show business experience to his weekly stint with Marie on ABC-TV. Donny was all of four years old when he was first introduced on "The Andy Williams Show," where he imitated Andy singing "You Are My Sunshine."

Donny was not in the initial Osmond brothers' group on Andy Williams' network television series. Brothers Alan, Wayne, Merrill and Jay made up the original Osmonds. When Andy Williams first introduced them, he is said to have goofed and called them the Ogden Brothers from Osmond, Utah! They probably didn't mind too much, since they had hoped to debut on Lawrence Welk's then-popular weekly program, and barely knew who Williams was.

Donny joined his brothers with Andy on tour in Allentown, Pa. After that, he never left the group. In addition to working with his older brothers, Donny has developed a singing style of his own, especially in the ballad field. He has 12 gold record albums of his own to date.

Born in Ogden, Utah, Donny spent his first five years there before his family moved to Arleta, Calif. From there they moved to Westwood, a community close to Los Angeles, and the home of UCLA. Eventually, the Osmonds returned to Utah, where they now live in Provo.

Donny was the seventh of George and Olive Osmond's nine children. He was the fifth member of the family to become a professional singer.

How has Donny been educated in areas other than singing? For the most part, by private tutors. By the time his series with Marie premiered, he had in effect been graduated from high school.

This educational style has been supplemented over the years by special coaching from Olive Osmond, whose family included a number of teachers. All the Osmonds received special family study

attention. Three hours of daily tutoring were provided to them, as required by California law, while they were doing television series. Correspondence courses have also been taken by some of the younger members of the family group.

As for Donny's outside interests, when time permits—which is probably not very often—he is said to enjoy karate, electronics and girls. He has a blue belt in karate, and has personally installed much of the recording equipment in the family's Provo studio.

As for girls, Donny enjoys dating very much. The Osmond family rules keep dating as a post-16 activity, so Donny has only had about two years in which to catch up to most of his young fans in this department, No doubt he hasn't had any lack of eager young women from which to choose his dates.

"I date a lot in Utah," he once confided to a reporter. "Here [in Los Angeles] we haven't had a chance to date, neither Marie nor I, because we're filming six days a week and taking dancing, singing, karate and ice-skating lessons." The basic life of a television performer does make it difficult to do most of the things other people simply take for granted.

Asked once what he likes in a girl, Donny replied, "Girls that be themselves. I hate phony girls, girls who try and act really cool to you 'cause you think that you're . . . 'cause they think that you're somebody. Want you to think they're hard to get. That bugss me. So, I like girls that be themselves. I don't like one particular type of girl. Everyone's different, and I like 'em to be different."

Donny, at another point, was quoted as saying, "To tell the truth, I love all the pretty girls. I really do. I love signing autographs for them. I only worry that in the crowds someone might get hurt. Like two years ago, at the Heathrow Airport, in London. When we arrived, so many turned out to welcome us, the ramps and the second balcony of the airport collapsed. That's why sometimes 'management' puts us in moving vans and all sorts of contraptions so the fans won't know we're there. It's just to avoid any accidents."

Talking once about all the fan magazine coverage the Osmonds get, Donny asked, "How much can you write about a person, you know, till yo u start dreamin' up stuff? It's publicity, I guess, but the things they write sometimes are a little . . . too extravagant. What are some of the captions . . . 'Is Jimmy really a midget?' Naw, seriously. Stuff like: 'Be Donny's first date.' " Sorry girls, but it's too late for that honor!

Too many fans prowling about the grounds of a Los Angeles home the Osmonds once lived in resulted in the group selling their house and taking refuge in hotels on future visits to Los Angeles. They moved officially back to Utah. When the new "Donny and Marie" series was begun, it was clear that the family wanted to live in a house. Hence, the studio audience for the program. The Osmonds asked their fans to give up waiting for them outside their home, and come see them tape their variety series. The fans have gone along with it and everybody seems to be happy about the positive results.

Donny's vital statistics are a must for true Osmond fans. He was born on December 9, stands 5'10" tall, weighs in at 130 pounds, has dark brown hair and brown eyes.

His pretty sister, Marie, is the youngest co-host and title star of a music and comedy-vartiety show on television today. Marie began her career at the age of seven while on tour with her brothers. When she stepped out on stage with them in Sweden, she not only changed the act, but also its name. What had been known before as the Osmond Brothers was now simply The Osmonds!

The family's music changed, too. The Osmond Brothers had begun singing in barbershop fashion. When Donny came along the music had evolved into ballads, and later, rock. With Marie's joining the group, country music became part of the Osmonds' style.

Marie's first solo album, "Paper Roses," was recorded in Nashville, It sold a million copies, thus becoming a gold LP.

Marie is the eighth of George and Olive Osmond's flock. She is, of course, their first and only daughter. Her seven older brothers are: Virl (30), Tommy (28), Alan (26), Wayne (24), Merrill (22), Jay (20), and, naturally, Donny (18). She also has one younger brother, Jimmy (12).

Marie is also a native of Ogden, Utah, where she attended public school until the fourth grade. She's been tutored since then, and is now studying on the 11th and 12th grade level. A member of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), she is involved in her religions's Mutual Improvement Association program with other girls of her age. She is interested, time-

The Osmonds

permitting, in clothes making, designing and cooking. Since she turned 16, Marie is also interested in dating boys!

Asked to comment about this once, Donny replied, "Marie dates now. My kid sister has only been allowed to start dating recently, since her 16th birthday. That's a family rule for all the Osmonds: no dating status until you're 16. In Marie's case, I, along with Alan and Merrill and Wayne and Jay and little Jimmy and our two older brothers, Tom and Virl, have to pass inspection on any guy who asks her for a date! So far, we haven't found anyone on that level—for a solo date with Marie. We double date. And we always have a protective eye on her!"

To this Marie was quoted as answering, "Isn't that something! Imagine, when I get old enough to marry—can't you just see my eight brothers all lined up and the poor guy having to ask each one's permission for my hand, besides my father's!"

Like any other teenage girl, Marie is fascinated with the fringe benefits of being a television star. "Oh, it is thrilling!" she exclaimed once in an interview. "Imagine having my own hairdresser and my own make-up artist, and a designer who draws eight different sketches each week for eight new costumes and dresses just for me. I can keep, or feel at ease to wear, any of the dresses that would be suitable away from the studio. And my nails—look! Aren't they beautiful? I have a professional manicure by an expert once a week. In Utah I do housework with Mother, of course. We go super-market shopping, cook and do the laundry. There are always four or five batches of laundry going in our washing machines. And my nails don't look like this."

Marie has dark brown eyes and dark brown hair. She weighs only 100 pounds, and stands 5'5" tall. Her birthday is October 13, which is a lucky day for her fans even when it falls on Friday!

What about Donny and Marie's brothers? Alan Osmond began his musical career at the age of 10, along with three of his younger brothers, Wayne, Merrill and Jay. They were known as The Osmond Brothers Quartet. Alan served then as now as the group's leader and spokesman.

An example of how Alan thinks surfaced in one past interview at the family's Provo, Utah headquarters. Alan told a reporter, "we're not complaining. I mean all those gold records upstairs. We must be doing something right, as far as selling records. It's just that we'd like acceptance. I mean here I am 26 years old. I want the other 26-year-olds to like me . . . I'm just as real as they are. I have the same philosophies about life, but that's me."

In July 1974 Alan became the second of the Osmond brothers—Merrill was the first—to be married. His bride, Suzanne Pinegar, was a former Brigham Young University cheerleader. Their first child, Michael Alan, was born November 4, 1975.

Alan plays rhythm guitar for the Osmonds, but is also an accomplished performer on other instruments. He has a broad vocal range, but describes himself as a baritone. In addition, he has composed many of the Osmond songs.

Woodworking, photography and painting are among Alan's hobbies. He is also involved in cinematography, and several brief films he has shot have appeared on Donny and Marie's program. His future goals include producing and directing.

Alan's vital statistics include: brown eyes and hair, 6'1" tall, and 170 pounds. He was born on June 22, 1949.

Wayne Osmond is the second oldest of the performing brothers. He was third to be married, choosing a former Miss Utah, Kathlyn White, as his bride. They were married on December 13, 1974. Between tours and long visits to Los Angeles, Kathlyn has persisted in completing her education at Brigham Young University.

Wayne has a rich bass voice. He is an accomplished artist on several instruments, but specializes on the saxaphone and guitar. He, too, is a composer as well as a performer, and has been heavily involved in the "Donny and Marie" series.

Mechanics, electronics, physics and chemistry are a few of Wayne's outside interests. They were important assets to him when he decided to become a pilot. Over an eight year period he has

earned every license in flying except airline transport. For a while he was a flight instructor and qualified several cadets for their pre-academy training. He actually had his license to fly an airplane before he had an ordinary driver's license!

Wayne's first date with Kathlyn included a flight in his own Cessna Skylane aircraft. Wayne's future might also include some production activity, and he would also like to become a dramatic actor.

In the vital statistics department, Wayne weighs in at 150 pounds, and stands an even 6' tall. He has brown eyes and dark brown hair. He was born on August 28, 1951.

Merrill Osmond is the third oldest of the Osmond performers, and was the first of the brothers to be married. His wife, Mary Carlson, was a cheerleader and graduate of Brigham Young University. Their first son, Travis, was born October 7, 1975.

Merrill can handle a wide variety of musical instruments, including bass, banjo, saxaphone, trombone and drums. He is the lead singer for the group's ballads, middle-of-the-road songs and up-tempo music. He is, in addition, a prolific composer.

Talking about the Osmonds, Merrill once went on record as stating, "We're sincere in what we believe in. We're not phony. People say, hey, you guys can't smile all the time, you're not real. Well we are real. We are happy people."

Golf is one of Merrill's favorite hobbies. Painting and photography are other interests. He and Mary

The Brothers Osmond

both love antiques and have furnished their Los Angeles apartment with many unusual items. Directing and producing are areas that Merrill would like to grow into in the future. He has also expressed some interest in the import business.

Merrill's vital statistics include hazel blue eyes, light brown hair, 150 pounds, and 5'11" height. His birthday is April 30, 1953.

Jay Osmond is the youngest of the original four brothers who broke into show business. He was a regular on "The Andy Williams Show" for seven years. He also appeared with his brothers in "The Travels of Jamie McPheeters."

A superb performer on the drums, Jay also plays piano and sax. His newest interest is soul dancing. He has helped choreograph the Osmonds' act for years, and was a principal choreographer for Donny and Marie's TV series.

Jay is heavily into sports. He is an enthusiastic student of karate. He's been a pro-am partner of Jimmy Miller in golf. When Jay's around, there is usually a football or a tennis racket at hand. Directing is a future ambition for Jay, too.

In terms of vital statistics, Jay weighs 155 pounds and stands 6' tall. He has brown eyes and hair, and was born on March 2, 1955.

Jimmy Osmond Strutting

Jimmy Osmond is the youngest of the performing Osmonds. At the tender age of three Jimmy made his debut on "The Andy Williams Show." On his first international tour, Jimmy won the hearts of Sweden by singing "Red Roses for a Blue Lady" in Swedish.

The following year he became a superstar in Japan where he made three recordings in Japanese. All three became gold records! Jimmy also received a huge trophy in Japan, having been voted the top male vocalist for 1970.

Jimmy's recording of "Long-Haired Lover From Liverpool" broke a record in England by holding the number one spot on the charts for over six weeks.

In his solo numbers on the "Donny and Marie" show, Jimmy has frequently appeared with some of the puppet characters from the "World of Sid and Marty Krofft." (The Brothers Krofft, incidentally, are the producers of "Donny and Marie." Raymond Katz is executive producer, and Art Fisher directs.)

Jimmy's performing abilities encouraged the producers of the "Donny and Marie" series to star him in their Madison Square Garden spectacular in February 1975. A sell-out crowd gave Jimmy standing ovations for his performances during the two week engagement. The demanding role involved nine costume changes and 14 songs each of which had to be sung twice daily!' In his spare time, Jimmy sculpts, paints, makes puppets, is a photographer and photo lab technician. With the two non-performing brothers, Virl and Tom, Jimmy works on paste-ups and graphics for the Osmonds's fan club mailings.

Jimmy's sports are tennis, baseball and golf. A former Little Leaguer, he is now in the Bronco League, where he plays shortstop and third base.

Jimmy was born in Canoga Park, Calif. All of his performing brothers and sisters were born in Ogden, Utah. Vital statistics for Jimmy are: hazel eyes, light brown hair, 5' tall and 100 pounds. He was born on April 16, 1963—and already has ten years of performing under his belt!

With all of these background notes on the Osmonds, the members of the group should take on highly individual personalities. Together they make a fascinating family of fine performers. □

These Are "The Osmonds"